

signs, lights, and dirt or gravelled parking areas rather than having a more unified sign and appearance arrangement that can be realized with a compact, well-planned commercial area.

Building condition and appearance is a second major problem -- for both residential and non-residential buildings. As will be covered in more detail later, the land use survey revealed that more than one-third (36.2%) of the housing in the planning area is substandard -- that is, it needs routine maintenance or in some cases, complete removal or renewal. This condition also exists in the form of commercial and industrial buildings, many of which are vacant and on the verge of falling down. Three or four buildings in the area delineated as the central business district are in this condition, as are some in outlying areas. Such decay usually has undesirable effects on neighboring land uses, such as loss in property and tax values, and the poor appearance caused by the dilapidated structures often spreads through a sizable portion of the neighborhood.

Poor street layout is evident. The older part of town basically follows the grid-type street pattern, with many streets leading into a deadend with no cul-de-sac or turning area at the end. This brings on such problems as sections of streets that are not continuous, causing inconvenience both to the average driver and to emergency vehicles such as fire engines that need to locate a point on a street without delay. Newer residential development is not as bad on this point, although some do include dirt streets that are poorly maintained. Poor lot layout is also present, particularly in some older sections where very small and double-fronted lots (with streets to both the front and rear of the lot) were allowed.